

Appl. No. : 08/835,732
Filed : April 11, 1997

In the above-identified Office Action, claims 1-2, 15-16 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Tsuchiyama et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,548,271) "as stated in the last final Office Action." Furthermore, claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuchiyama et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,548,271) "as stated in the last final Office Action."

Applicant again makes reference to the telephonic interview conducted between the Examiner and Applicant's attorney, Drew S. Hamilton, on March 28, 2002. During that interview, the Examiner agreed with the Applicant that amendment of claims 1 and 16 to cancel the term "conducting" and insert therefore "transmissive" so as to define an "LCD housing made in a single piece from a light transmissive material" distinguishes over the teachings of the art of record, and particularly over Tsuchiyama et al., which includes a back light which is not a housing and which includes a "reflection frame 36" rather than a material which is light transmissive. Accordingly, the Examiner agreed that the amendments to claims 1 and 16 as presented in Applicant's response dated March 29, 2002, distinguish over the art of record.

With respect to claim 17, in that telephone interview, counsel for Applicant noted that the claim defined a method for conducting a light in a computer system having an LCD and an LCD housing. In view of the discussion with respect to claims 1 and 16, counsel for Applicant also agreed to amend claim 17 to define the act of "conducting the generated light through the LCD housing to the LCD, wherein the LCD housing is made of a single piece from light transmissive material and functions as a light pipe for illuminating the LCD and protects the LCD." Accordingly, the Examiner agreed that this claim would also distinguish over the art of record.

Applicant was surprised to receive a further rejection, by the Examiner, asserting essentially the same bases for the rejection as had been asserted in prior Office Actions. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider his position both in light of that telephone interview, and in view of the further amendments that are presented herewith.

In accordance with the Examiner interview, the term "transmissive" now exists in each of the independent claims 1, 16, 17 and 20, in distinguishing the claimed invention over the prior art. These claims have been further amended to distinguish that the transmissive or translucent material has "the same light transmissive characteristics throughout." (See, e.g., claim 1).

In the Office Action mailed June 19, 2002, the Examiner stated that he "agrees that a back light from Tsuchiyama et al. might be formed from at least three layers, e.g., frame, light

conducting plate, diffusion sheet.” However, in the above quote, the Examiner left out the term “reflection” which belongs in front of the term “frame.” In fact, referring to Figure 4, Tsuchiyama at column 3, lines 32-34, it is stated that “the back light, generally 32A, has a rectangular saucer-like reflection frame 36 and a light conducting plate 38 which are formed integrally with each other.” (Emphasis added). The purpose of the reflection frame 36 is to reflect light. This is distinguished from the light conducting plate 38 which is defined in that sentence. The “reflection frame” is not intended to be a “light conducting plate.” Furthermore, the reflection frame 36 is, by definition, not light transmissive, but rather is light reflective. It was on this basis that the Examiner, in the above-referenced telephone interview, agreed with counsel for Applicant that replacing the term “conducting” in claims 1, 16 and 17 with “transmissive” would distinguish those claims over the art. Applicant hereby submits that the claims, with the previously submitted language, are still clearly distinguished over the art.

In the Office Action mailed June 19, 2002, the Examiner states that “however, those three pieces, all have light conducting characteristics and formed as a unitary construction of translucent material (i.e., single piece from the light conducting material), namely back light (32A).” Thus, the Examiner has characterized this back light as including the three pieces which have “light conducting characteristics.” However, the claim is not based on whether pieces have “light conducting characteristics.” In fact, the term “light conducting material” was previously cancelled from independent claims 1, 16 and 17 in favor of the term “light transmissive material.” (See, e.g., claim 1). Furthermore, the reflecting frame is not a light transmissive material, but rather a light reflective material. Nevertheless, this distinction has been further clarified by the amendment presented herein, wherein it is pointed out that the LCD housing is “made in a single piece from a single light transmissive material, said material having the same light transmissive characteristics throughout.” (See, e.g., claim 1, claims 16 and 17 include similar limitations). Similarly, claim 20 also includes the limitation of a “translucent material which has the same light transmissive characteristics throughout.”

The Examiner states that he “agrees that a back light from Tsuchiyama et al. might be formed from at least three layers.” The three layers of Tsuchiyama each have different light conducting characteristics, with at least one of them not even being light transmissive. In contrast, Applicant’s claims each define a housing made of a single light transmissive (or translucent in the case of claim 20) material wherein that material “has the same light

transmissive characteristics throughout.” Applicant respectfully submits that no such structure is either taught or made obvious by the Tsuchiyama et al. reference alone, or in combination with any of the other prior art of record.

In addition to the above, Applicant notes that back light 32A of Figure 4F does not define a housing for an LCD but rather fits within the casing 10a of the pager 10 as indicated at 32 in Figure 3B. Thus, the casing 10a defines the housing, rather than the back light 32 or 32A. The back light 32 does not comprise a housing as set forth in Applicant’s claims.

In view of the above, since each of claims 1, 16 and 20 include the limitations as more fully described above, and in view of the distinction of those claims over the art of record, as also set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of those independent claims be removed.

With respect to claim 17, which was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Applicant notes that the claim includes:

conducting the generated light through the LCD housing directly to the LCD,
wherein the LCD housing is made in a single piece from a single light transmissive material, wherein the single light transmissive material has the same light transmissive characteristics throughout and functions as a light pipe for illuminating the LCD and as a housing which protects the LCD.

In view of the discussion with respect to the independent claims above, counsel for Applicant submits that the above-identified feature, which includes conducting the light through the light transmissive material, “wherein the single light transmissive material has the same light transmissive characteristics throughout,” along with the other features of that claim, define subject matter which is clearly patentable over the art of record.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-9 and 11-15, which each depend from independent claim 1, and claims 18 and 19, which each depend from independent claim 17, also define subject matter which is patentable over the art of record.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-9 and 11-20, as presented herein, define subject matter which is patentable over the art of record. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-9 and 11-20 are now in condition for immediate allowance and such prompt allowance of the same is respectfully requested.

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CONCLUSION

The Applicant has endeavored to address the concerns as expressed in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, amendments to the claims for patentability purposes pursuant to statutory sections 102, 103 and/or 112, the reasons therefore, and arguments in support of the patentability of the pending claims that are presented above.

Any claim amendments which are not specifically discussed in the above remarks are not made for patentability purposes, and it is believed that the claims would satisfy the statutory requirements for patentability without the entry of such amendments. Rather, these amendments have only been made to increase claim readability, to improve grammar, and to reduce the time and effort required of those in the art to clearly understand the scope of the claim language. Any new claims presented above are of course intended to avoid the prior art, but are not intended as replacements or substitutes for any cancelled claims. They are simply additional specific statements of inventive concepts described in the application as originally filed.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections is specifically requested. If the Examiner finds any remaining impediment to the prompt allowance of these claims that could be clarified with a telephone conference, the Examiner is respectfully requested to initiate the same with the undersigned.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: Sept. 30, 2002

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Five Times Amended) A computer display comprising:
 - a LCD housing made in a single piece from a single light transmissive material, said material having the same light transmissive characteristics throughout;
 - a light source coupled to the LCD housing;
 - a LCD coupled directly to the LCD housing;
 - wherein the LCD housing functions as a light pipe for conducting light from the light source directly to the LCD and protects the LCD.
16. (Six Times Amended) A computer comprising:
 - a display panel;
 - first means for generating light for the display panel; and
 - second means made in a single piece from a single light transmissive material for housing the display panel, wherein the second means is connected directly to the display panel and functions as a light pipe so as to conduct light received from the first means for generating light directly to the display panel and wherein the single light transmissive material has the same light transmissive characteristics throughout.
17. (Six Times Amended) A method for conducting light in a computer system having a LCD and a LCD housing comprising:
 - generating light; and
 - conducting the generated light through the LCD housing directly to the LCD, wherein the LCD housing is made in a single piece from a single light transmissive material, wherein the single light transmissive material has the same light transmissive characteristics throughout and functions as a light pipe for illuminating the LCD and as a housing which protects the LCD.
- 20 (Twice Amended) A computer display comprising:
 - a LCD housing made by a unitary construction of a single translucent material which has the same light transmissive characteristic throughout;
 - a light source coupled to the LCD housing so as to transmit light into the LCD housing; and

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a LCD coupled to the LCD housing such that said LCD is supported by said LCD housing, and wherein light received from the light source is transmitted from the LCD housing to the LCD.

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